

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00555 161051Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 /090 W
-----111313 161116Z /14/15

R 150917Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9269
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0555

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT CORRECTED)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR MASS PINS LA UR
SUBJECT:FRENCH WRAP UP AIR MISHAPS IN LAOS

REF: (A) VIENTIANE 0258; (B) 77 VIENTIANE 1370;
(C) 77 VIENTIANE 1408; (D) VIENTIANE 0474

1. A FRENCH DIPLOMATIC SOURCE HAS PROVIDED US WITH THE
FOLLOWING INFORMATION SUMMARIZING THE FRENCH EMBASSY'S
CURRENT INFORMATION REGARDING AIR CRASHES OVER THE PAST
EIGHT MONTHS.

A. ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1977, A MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANE (LAO)
WAS SHOT DOWN IN THE PHOU KHOUN AREA (SALA PHOU KHOUN ON THE
LUANG PRABANG-XIENG KHOUANG BORDER).

B. ALSO IN LATE SEPTEMBER OR EARLY OCTOBER 1977 AN
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R-34 HELICOPTER WAS SHOT DOWN TO THE WEST OF PHU BIA.
ALSO TWO AN-2 OBSERVATION PLANES WERE SHOT DOWN DURING
THE PERIOD, ONE TO THE EAST AND ONE TO THE SOUTH OF
PHU BIA.

C. ON OCTOBER 11, A MIG-21 CRASHED BETWEEN BAN SONE
AND LONG CHANG. THE PLANE MAY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT DOWN
BY HOSTILE FIRE.

D. ON OCTOBER 14, AN AN-2 WITH A SOVIET CREW CRASHED TO THE WEST OF SAM TEU IN HOUA PHAN PROVINCE.

E. ON NOVEMBER 28, AN MIG-21 CRASHED TO THE WEST OF BAN SONE. THE PLANE MAY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT DOWN BY HOSTILE FIRE.

F. ON JANUARY 12, A HELICOPTER FORCED DOWN BY REBEL FIRE WAS BURNED.

G. ON FEBRUARY 25, A MIG-21 CRASHED NORTH OF TALAT WITH A SOVIET INSTRUCTOR ABOARD.

H. ON MARCH 8, A LAO AVIATION DC-3 CRASHED 40 KILOMETERS FROM VIENTIANE.

2. THE FRENCH CURRENTLY BELIEVE THAT 11 MIG-21S ARRIVED IN VIENTIANE IN SEPTEMBER 1977 AND THAT AN ADDITIONAL SIX WERE BROUGHT INTO THE PLAIN OF JARS IN THE SAME TIME FRAME.

3. COMMENT: WE DOUBT THAT THE LAO (AND SOVIETS) HAVE LOST AS MANY PLANES TO HOSTILE FIRE AS THIS REPORT CONTENDS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE MIG CRASH WHICH THE FRENCH REPORT AS TAKING PLACE ON FEBREARY 25 IN FACT OCCURED ON FEBRUARY 21 (REF A).
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4. THE FRENCH ORIGINALLY CLAIMED (REF B) THAT TEN MIG'S WERE BROUGHT INTO WATTAY AND FIVE TO THE PLAIN OF JARS (REF C). WE NOTE THAT THIS COUNT HAS UNEXPLAINABLE INCREASED BY ONE AT EACH LOCATION.

5. WE HAD LEARNED OF THE OCTOBER 10-11 MIG CRASH THROUGH THE FRENCH EARLIER (REF C). WE ALSO WERE AWARE OF THE FEBRUARY CRASH. THE EMBASSY HAS NOT HOWEVER, CONFIRMED THE NOVEMBER 28 MIG CRASH (SUBPARA 1.E. ABOVE). IT HAS RECIEVED UNCONFIRMED REPORTS OF A THIRD CRASH IN MARCH 1978 IN SAVANNAKHET. REF D PROVIDES A LATE APRIL COUNT OF 8 MIGS AT WATTAY.
ROBERTS

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